Proposal for inclusion of the Lepcha caste in Primitive Groups

2238. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that State Government of Sikkim has passed a proposal in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly to include Lepcha caste in Primitive, Groups;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the above proposal is pending with the Centra! Government, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) by when it is likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PR. KYNDIAH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In the resolution passed by the Sikkim Legislative Assembly it has been *inter alia,* stated that the growth of the Lepcha population is almost stagnant and the literacy rate is very low; most of them live in far flung areas and are not exposed to modern environment; they are socially, economically, educationally and politically very backward, their living conditions has remained primitive. Therefore, in order to protect and safeguard the vanishing tribe and to give them a distinct identity, the Assembly has resolved that the Lepchas be declared as a Primitive Tribe Groups.

(c) and (d) The proposal received from the Government of Sikkim has been examined as per the prescribed criteria for declaring a community as a PTG, and on the basis of the census figures of 2001,1991 and 1981. The Lepcha community does not qualify to be declared a PTG according to these criteria.

Schemes for vocational training centres for Tribals in Sikkim

2239. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme for setting up of vocational training centres/courses in the North-Eastern Region particularly in the State of Sikkim for unemployed tribal men/women;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of vocational training centres at present in the NER, State-wise and institute-wise; and

(d) whether Government propose to set up more such training centres in tribal dominated areas of the country including Sikkim if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBALAFFAIRS (SHRI RR. KYNDIAH): (a) and (b) Ministry of Tribal Affairs implements a central sector scheme, namely Vocational Training in Tribal Areas, applicable to the whole country which covers the States of the North-Eastern Region, including Sikkim. The scheme is implemented through State Govts./UTAdministrations/NGOs.

(c) The number of Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) sanctioned to the NER States, and run by State Govts. State-wise is as under:—

SI.No.	Name of the State Govt.	No. of VTCs sanctioned
1.	Sikkim	13
2.	Assam	26
3.	Tripura	08
4.	Manipur	10
5.	Mizoram	05
	TOTAL :	62

The details of NGO-run VTCs operating in the NER during the last three years as under:—

(i) Assam

(a) Dr. Ambedkar Mission, VHI-Dhopatri, Distt.-Kamrup, Assam.

(b) Pathari Vocational Institute, Nagaon, Assam.

(c) Gram Vikas parishad, Vill-Rangalso, RO. Jamarnuer, Distt. Nagaon, Assam.

(ii) Meghalaya

(a) Nongkrem Youtfi DevelopmentAssociation, Nongkrem, Shillong, Meghalaya.

(d) The Ministry sanctions new VTCs on the basis of complete proposals received from the State Govts, and subject to availability of funds. The complete proposals including details of already operational VTCs, utilization certificates in respect of funds released previously, and details of new VTCs proposed to be set up.

Insurance coverage scheme for primitive tribal groups

2240. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have identified 75 primitive tribal groups to provide the benefit of insurance coverage under the Jaishree Bima Yojana of LIC and had prepared a scheme for their habitat development;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are also working on a plan to rope in banks to provide micro finance to tribals for income-generating activities through self help groups; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.R'. KYNDIAH): (a) and (b)The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has, since 2004-05, launched an insurance scheme known as the Janashree Bima Yojana to cover in a phased manner, all families of the 75 identified Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs). The scheme is implemented through the Life Insurance Corporation of India under the umbrella scheme of 'Development of Primitive Tribal Groups' and insures the head of each PTG family for five years against accidental death, permanent disability, natural death, partial disability, etc. The Ministry has released Rs. 20.47 crore up to 2006-07, to cover 4,09,500 heads of PTG families at a premium of Rs. 500/- per head.

The umbrella scheme of Development of Primitive Tribal Groups can cover any kind of development scheme. The Ministry has advised the State Governments to place emphasis on hamlet/habitat development of PTGs.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The Ministry and the National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSTFDC) have taken a preliminary decision that the commercial banks will act as additional channelising